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*Prioritising
Wellbeing*

Reflections – An Anthology of Poetry

The Garden' watercolour by Jean Allen, resident of Richmond Villages (Bupa retirement living) Northampton. Artwork created in Creative Minds session with artist Lily Grob.


NAPA dedicates this
anthology to those
who – died, helped, are
forever changed


Reflections

An Anthology of Poetry

March 2021



*A day to reflect on a year – and loss – like no other,
to reach out to a friend who's been grieving quietly at home.
A day to unite, to hope, be there for one another,
to remind the millions bereaved that they're not alone.*

Poppy Dillon- Marie Curie



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NAPA is a national charity, we support the care sector to prioritise wellbeing and promote activity, arts, and engagement.

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A Time of Reflection

Since the first lockdown began in March 2020, hundreds of thousands of people have died. Too many lives have been cut short and millions have been bereaved.

On 23 March, the first anniversary of the first UK lockdown.

Marie Curie; supported by NAPA and hundreds of other organisations, led the National Day of Reflection, enabling us to reflect on our collective loss, support those who had been bereaved, and share our hope for a brighter future.

In acknowledgement of the national day, NAPA invited our members and supporters to write and/or support someone else to write a quatrain (a 4-line poem.)

We encouraged poets to reflect on the pandemic and their experience of lockdown.

We were amazed to receive hundreds of poems and moved by the impact the process had on many of the contributors.

'Thank you for encouraging me to stop, think and reflect'.

'This has been really therapeutic – thank you!'

'It's been lovely to remember her, as she was.'

'I miss him so much and writing about the loss and the pain was really sad but very helpful – thank you'.

We are proud to be able to share a poem from every poet who submitted their reflections. Thank you to everyone who contributed and thank you for reading it.

We would also like to thank Famileo, who sponsored the anthology and made it possible for us to make the e-book available for free download.

As we write, read, and share poetry we may be reminded of personal loss and change, this may be a powerful and uplifting experience, but it may also be upsetting. It is important that we take care of ourselves and each other. We suggest sharing these poems with someone you trust, perhaps over a cup of tea and to take your time to connect and reflect.

If you need to talk to someone, you can contact the **free NAPA Helpline on 0800 158 5503** we can provide a listening ear and signpost you to specialist support services and helpful resources.

You can also call **Marie Curie's free Support Line on 0800 090 2309** to talk to a trained support line officer about practical and emotional concerns of get ongoing support from a bereavement volunteer.

Thank you.
Hilary



During the past year, more than ever, Famileo has supported the care home workforce, helping them in their mission to support residents to remain connected to their families and friends.

Our purpose is to fight loneliness and to recreate family bonds, by connecting people, families, and staff, that is why we decided to support this poetry book and show our support and compassion. We see this poetry book as a way to remember this chapter of our history. It allows us to express hope, pain and say goodbye to those we have lost, whilst also celebrating the lives they have lived.

This book contains stories – “I miss you”, “I am feeling blue” but also “I love you” and “thank you”. In this way, it is similar to our Famileo gazettes, which contain snaps of families' lives, captured to share joy with older relatives: happy moments, and important memories.

As a celebration of the care home workforce who have given their hearts and souls to protect and care for the most vulnerable, we want this book to be available to all.

Please continue to care for each other, and especially those who are the most fragile and vulnerable, those whose wellbeing is so precious to us.

Today there are many ways to show them your love and stay connected.

Find out more about Famileo [here](#)

Thank you.
The Famileo Team

A Few Words

During lockdown and as a result of Covid-19, many of us have seen how important meaningful activity, creativity and the arts are.

We have learned first-hand how they can contribute to our wellbeing, health, and happiness. The arts in particular have offered us stimulation, escape, solace, invigoration, and connection, throughout the testing times we have all been living through. As an activity co-ordinator from a care home said to us:

"I don't know how we would have survived Covid-19 without the arts".

Many people have turned to creative pastimes, as a means of getting through this period in time. We have enjoyed all the beautiful rainbow window art, admired painted pebbles left in parks, connected via zoom to sing, craft, dance and paint and relaxed by watching programmes such as the wonderful Grayson's Art Club. Art connects us, elevates us, and helps build communities. One of the art forms we have seen used a lot in NAPA care settings during this time is poetry. The Poetry Takeaway, an arts organisation who take poetry to new audiences, had an extremely busy year which included setting a challenge for us on The NAPA

National Day of Arts in Care Homes. In the words of their Head Chef Michael Bolger:

"Poetry takes the things we find difficult to put into words and says it for us. Whether a poem is whispered in your ear just for you or is a great crashing marching band in the middle of a shopping centre, poetry moves us in unique ways, it can shake us up, it can delicately brush an arm or be a beaming smile that doesn't apologise."

NAPA is very proud to share this new collection of poems, compiled for The National Day of Reflection. It includes pieces written by residents, staff, friends, and families on the theme of Reflection. It is important that in our haste to move forwards into happier times, we take a minute to stop and reflect on all that has passed, to remember the sacrifices and hard work of so many and to honour those that we have lost.

We hope that these poems connect with you, make you smile and perhaps even prompt a tear...

Alison Teader, Programme Director
NAPA, Arts in Care Homes

Michael Bolger, Head Chef, The
Poetry Takeaway

A picture paints 365 days of longing
Mum says, "If only" as she reaches for her beloved.
He says, "Do we have an axe to break the glass?" I
say, "good question".

Sally Knocker



In the Daffodils

*This day is more than one thing and all things within
its name, this day will be marked differently but our call
for it is the same,*

This day will be the day that We plant hope into this pain.

We proudly stand with Marie Curie Who have given us a way,

A way to feel connected when,

*We don't know what to say, A way to shine a light for those,
Who will need it the most today.*

*For those who have lost dear friends, and keep
their memories near,*

*Whose "unstinting love" towards those in need
Will continue to grow kindness here.*

*For those who in life made ours beautiful,
In their own unique ways,*

When we make our yellow crafts

*It is to show that the beauty of you stays, and when
all this darkness has passed, it will be memories of you
that remains.*

For all those who we did not know and yet will never forget:

We think of you today, in the moment we take to reflect.

*For those who ensured that this moment, Will be
written in time with love:*

*Love in times of darkness, For all the new stars above,
And love for all the everyday heroes, and for all those
we wait to hug.*

*On the Day of Reflection, that is here to bring us
together: We gather in hope for better times and for
those we will miss forever.*

*We will think of you in the light that shines from
our doors, candles, and windowsills,*

*We will wait for you throughout every Winter
And find you in the daffodils.*

Lily Roubians

*Wind, wind heather gypsy whistling in my tree
All the heart of he is tipsy at the thought of thee
Sweet with scent of colour fresh with breath of sea
Wind, wind heather gypsy whistling in my tree*

Alice Scott



*I don't want to!
No! No! No!
I won't ever give ago!
Go Away!*

Ann Whitmore

For our Margaret

*The froth of the goat's milk, pail swings in your hand.
Flush-cheeked and glowing, at one with the land.
Not trapped behind glass, air silent and still
You're free to soar high with the swifts on the hill.*

Anna Park



Missing

*If I had known as year would pass
Before I next would hold you
I would have made that moment last
And so much I would have told you*

Bob Field, Nancy Davies, and Margaret Timms

*A lonely place is lockdown
No family or friends
But love is all around us
Our broken hearts will mend*

.....
Brendoncare Knightwood



*Cry our tears
Sing our songs
Soon be together
The roads been long!*

.....
Bubbly Grubb

*The silence in the air has been haunting and a
pause has been placed upon us.
A virus of uncertainty and fear spreads among
us all bringing loss and sadness.
Time now to stop again, be silent and prayer for
those who have wandered beyond the clouds.
Remember their faces, their voices, and their
music and together we shall not forget.*

.....
Charlotte Miller



I am still me
*The same face, the same smile
Dementia can't hide
Just see what's in my heart and inside
You will be pleasantly surprised
I am still me*

.....
Chris Maddocks

*I want to love you, I try to care...
but my thoughts & actions, dread us with so much despair...
Friends and families faces just don't appear anymore,
They are locked behind, that Covid door.*

Chris Roberts



*Feel the breeze brush your hair,
The smell of the nice fresh air.
Blossom on trees are starting to show,
The flowers will soon be starting to grow.*

Chris Thompson

Living On In You

*When a loved one passes, there's much sadness, loss and grief,
But remember, they've just moved on and found their
inner peace.*

*The woes and pains of our earthly world, have melted all away,
And they now enjoy the sunrise of a beautiful new day.*

*It is us, the loved ones left behind, that have a heavy heart,
For we have so much love for them, it's hard to be apart.*

*But we can take solace, that within us they live on,
With all those happy memories, it's only physically
they are gone.*

*So laugh at jokes they told you, remember the warmth
in their voice,
Think of all the happy times and let your heart rejoice.*

*You've shared their life and they've shared yours,
a gift that's yours to keep,
And you'll always have a love for them, that runs
long and deep.*

*So say their name, tell stories, of times you shared together,
And find comfort in the fact that they live on in you forever.*

Nick Fewings

*Some of our friends are not
With us today but in our hearts
they have never
Been away.*

Christine Clark



*Of the many things lost or mislaid
I miss your cooking most.
And then, your piano, gently played.
Whilst now, in empty space, I burn the silent toast.*

Danuta Lipinska

*I am past the point of missing and
instead, I fear seeing you. I am
beyond the need for kissing. But
in my mind I still hear you.*

David Woodhead



At the seaside
*Sitting on the sand with a bucket and spade
With a nice big umbrella to give us some shade
Along come the boys who want to play cricket
They'll be angry cause we haven't a wicket*

**Dawn Walker, Margarita Pascal, Patricia Graham
and Eve Kelly**

Hug!

*Always a nice warm feeling,
We've missed these like crazy since last year!
Can't wait for a hug from our loved ones
It won't be long now 'til they're here!*

Diane Thumwood



*A cup of tea, I sit and stare
Thinking about the things we can't all bear
The people we've lost, the laughs, the fun
But their memory will live on in everyone.*

Dorothy Millinchip

*I miss my family most of all.
I miss those who have now passed,
Their smiles and talking to them.
Most of all hearing them laugh.*

Dorothy Stevenson



Wanny
*Dark, deep eyes, still, watching, in her place, the rug on the floor
Wellies placed neatly, below coat, hanging on the rack
The lead hangs, untouched beside the door
She sighs deeply, knowing her old friend will not be back*

Douglas Noble

*Everyone is in a mask
We can't tell what they say
I hope this will soon pass
And the virus will go away*

Edna Langford



*To start the day's routine,
I always wake up early
Look forward to a lovely chat
With my friend called Shirley!*

Eileen Benton

From my window

*From my window
I watched the world stand still
From Busy roads and towns
To houses on the hill
The world shut down
There was nowhere to go
All we could see were
Pictures of rainbows
We've smiled and We've cried
We've laughed and we've stayed safe
We got through it all
With a smile on our face
The pubs were shut
No concerts or shows
But we are still here
Thanks to our Superheroes
The sun is coming out
The virus will go away
I will continue to hold hope
Until that beautiful day*

A poem by the residents of The Lawn

*When the world shrank to a screen and a room
and torrents of news, anxiety, gloom
Chats with new-found old friends in green fields
and heroes and hope were a salve and a shield.*

Emma Hewat



*Look forward not behind,
Days are glowing,
Hopes in hand,
One jab, life on the mend.*

Ena Huttone

A Simple Prayer

*Give us sunshine, birds, and flowers
Trees and streams and happy hours,
Take care of those we love the best,
And give us patience to put up with the rest!*

Enid Troubridge



When we first met

*When we first met
I told him I was in debt
He said I have no money
So, you better start running, honey*

Eve Kelly

Zoom

*Another hour of shopping
Another hour of gloom
I can't wait for eleven
Then it's time to zoom*

Gail Gregory



Missing Moments

*Meeting up with family & friends,
Like a distant memory now,
Longing for this to end,
Let's get back to that, somehow*

Gianna Burns

*Loving the springtime green and yellow
Resting in peace with the light so mellow
Thankful for an abundance to share
Aware of the limits and restrictions elsewhere.*

Gloria Haynes



*It may seem like we are all being forced apart
but my family will always fill my heart.
It's been a long time since I have seen their smile
Let's all keep going we will get there in a while.*

Greta Venables

*I love the smell of the bonfire
On a cold winter's night
Makes me feel cheery and warm
Happy and bright.*

Gwen Groome



*In loving memory of those we've lost,
Every day we're still counting the cost,
Of each mother, father, daughter, and son,
Irreplaceable – everyone.*

Heather Norman

Connections

*From out of the blue
Connection denied
No hugs or kisses
As loved ones died*

*Technology became
Our way to connect
As we relied on computers
For a means to reflect*

*The nation gave thanks
Every Thursday with bangs
With battered old pans*

*In our care homes all over the land
Waiting and hoping for the dark times to pass
Connections remade
Though divided by glad*

*But all was not lost
The menace given a shove
For it would be beaten
With a vaccine
And love*

Gareth Palmer

'2021'

*2020, that was the year that everything changed,
Routines, disruptions, adjustments felt strange,
Friends and family left us and for now were apart,
You're the fondest memories cradling our heart*

Helen Baker



*Platforms, concourses – all deserted
An empty backpack; a locked front door
A catastrophe-crisis nearly averted
Your ticket expired the month before*

Hilary Woodhead

*A year full of sadness, a year full of tears,
A year when we've had to march right through our fears
But a year full of love, of hope and good weather
A year where we've shown what we can achieve altogether.*

Isobel Jones



*Beginning an adventure,
Learning new things together,
Sharing knowledge,
We will always remember*

Jack Thompson

You Do Know Me

*When you can't recall my name or
how in your life I play a part
Don't look for me in your head, do not despair
You will find me in your heart*

.....

Jackie Poole



*A little snowdrop made me smile
And it had been a little while
It gave me strength; it gave me hope
And then I realised, I could cope.*

.....

Jan Millward

*Days shared together
Memories of the past
Thoughts, dreams and wishes
These are the things that last*

.....

Jennifer Dudley



*The countryside in Newbury
In my childhood days
Lots of lovely memories of seeing
horses stride away.*

.....

Jenny Lawrence

*Walking through the bluebells,
The perfume oh so sweet.
It feels like a carpet,
Underneath my feet!*

Joy Wood



*Nobody coming in, nobody going out.
Covid is what it is all about.
Seeing family through a window
or talking on a phone.*

Joyce Baxtrem

*The Easter bunny is on his way
I can't wait for that special Sunday.
Chocolate, cakes, ice cream and sweets
These are all of my favourite treats.*

Joyce Holliday



*Virtual hugs and cuddles is all we can have
Grandchildren growing up and missing it all.
Shopping has become a thing of the past.
Roll on normality.*

Joyce Tibbett

Those who leave us

*All people leave a trace behind them
but some people leave a mark on us
They make us better persons
and their legacy lives on*

Kasia Patynowska



*On this day of reflection as we think of those lost
We remember with sadness what Covid has cost.
Yet their memories live on and bring comfort and cheer
As we look back on their lifetime and not just this past year.*

Kate Smyth

A Cup of Tea!

*First thing in the morning,
Last thing at night,
Best drink any time of day
Keeps the nation going with all its might!*

Kath Tombs



*I am writing a poem today
It's all a bit of a tease
I really have nothing to say,
So do come and help if you please.*

Keith Frow

*The Blackthorn, so bare and unwelcoming
Has blossomed once more.
Let us learn to bloom again,
To unfurl after the harshest winter.*

.....
Kirsty Cartin



Mums' Law

*Wipe your feet and shut the door!
Mind your P's and Q's!
Don't tell lies, or answer back,
Mum's law was the rule!*

.....
Len Cornish

*When I am happy, I dress cute,
But when I am sad, I dress blue
When I am with friends, I dress white,
When I am at a party, I dress colourful.*

.....
Leonor Schaff



*By the window birds in sight
Sky is blue clouds are white
Sun is shining. Very bright!*

.....
Lily Lay

*We made this our home
In which we can roam
Looking to the garden
It does feel like home*

Linda Bose



*Your strong lithe being, tis no more,
But in my memory, it will remain.
Our life of love,
And free from pain.*

Liz Richards

*Strangers in the Night was playing on the radio
When the final phone call came
And took you back, back to the night
You met and fell in love.*

Lyn Fountain



*Shopping for a neighbour
Gym by Zoom to keep fit
Volunteering Vaccinator
Simply doing my bit.*

Lynne Phair

What I miss most

*What I miss most
Is being by the coast
With the sun shining bright
It's an utter delight*

Margarita Pascal and Dawn Walker



*At this time of year, we are busy thinking about
sowing seeds for the spring.
We live in a care home and with the help of Norm
I hope to bring lovely flowers into the home for summer.*

Marjorie Webb

*It took a pandemic to show us
What now we all know
That we need other people
To live, thrive and grow.*

Martin Green



*Rough are the knots to the trap
The lobster must not escape
He needs food and money
What does the lobster need?*

Maureen Wilkins

*Beauty of the country
Lies within your heart
No matter where you are
It's with you from the start*

.....
Mavis Powell



For every 'You'

*I clapped on my doorstep to celebrate you
I cried my tears and grieved for you
I waved and blew kisses through screens to you
I miss you and can't wait to see you*

.....
Michelle Williams

*Fold the napkins,
Smell the food,
Warm and cosy,
Time for a snooze.*

.....
Min Marsh



*I stand against the wardrobe wall.
I hold the sobs, but the tears do fall.
I hear the buzzer and I am all a flutter.
I replace with a smile and do not mutter.*

.....
Natalie Ravenscroft

*Was it really so long ago?
How strange, it seems like yesterday,
We were in so strange a land,
And felt a tension rising.*

.....
Norman Brookes



*Set aside your difference, whatever it may be,
Join together not only this day but eternally
We'll never be ashamed to cry
For those gone and those left behind who couldn't
say their goodbye*

.....
Oliver Harding

*Connie. 99 and Yorkshire
Covid struck before her Queen knew of her.
70 years married, Les his name
For he and the family, life never the same*

.....
Oliver Thomas



*Feeling isolated, feeling far from fine
I can look all around me at the wonders that are mine
I feel my spirits lift through the love that's given me
So much joy and comfort in the beauty that I see*

.....
Pam Fulcher

*Memories of you
Pies in the book
Those were the days
I've still got the look!*

Pam Haynes



*Spring is almost here
I could shed a tear.
I can't wait for the sunny days ahead
I will be in the garden on the sunbed.*

Pat Cornwall

What I miss most

*Sharing a smile with my family
With hugs and kisses to hold
Creating new memories gradually
When all of us start to grow old.*

Patricia Graham and Dawn Walker



Flying planes

*Up in the sky
Flying so high
Please don't crush
Or else I'll die*

Patricia Graham and Eve Kelly

A cup of tea

*A cup of tea
Means a lot to me
With a snack on the side
That I cannot hide*

Patricia Graham, Daphne W and Eve Kelly



When we first met

*I remember dearly
The day I met you,
It was raining heavily
And I even lost one shoe*

Patricia Graham, Margarita Pascal, and Alex Vasile

Where the earth ends and the soul begins

*A place of power and peace in which your spirit always spins
Your universal rhythm reflected in each heartbeat
The Song of your love and life, in memory forever complete*

Premal Bhatt



*The year 2020 wasn't a good start
People all around starting to depart
Be nice to see family close to our hearts
For a tea dance with tea and tarts*

Residents of Lavender Oaks

*Come walk with me for a while
hold my hand as you smile
In the park we will sit
while watching the children trying to skip*

.....
Residents of Liberty House Care Home



Pandemic

*This pandemic has controlled our lives in more ways than one,
Stealing our days and happiness by splitting families apart,
But now that we are moving on there's one thing we must do,
Remember those we lost this year and the things that
they could do.*

.....
Residents of Marriott House and Lodge

*The sun will shine again the clouds will fade
The memories will remain forever
Time will move on be thankful for life
Because we are all stronger together*

.....
Sandra Walley



*Courage of the staff
Shine a light into our life
Helps us cope with whatever comes
Whether it be for joy or for strife.*

.....
Sarah Lindsay

*Let's take a moment, let's stop and pause,
To reflect upon the year that was and all we've laid to rest,
As we think of all the bad we've seen and the price
so many paid,
Let's be grateful for the good that's shown humankind
at its absolute best.*

.....

Sue Ascott



*I've lost David and Rosemary
I can't hold Jakey and Ethan
But inside Olivia
A new life is growing.*

.....

Sue Heiser

In loving memory.

*You have gone up to heaven
We are now apart
But for always and forever
You will be in my heart*

.....

Sue Smith



*Another day passes, another day gone
More flowers in the garden, birds still singing their song
Sounds of nature all around,
How I long to be in a very, very large crowd*

.....

Sue Trischitta

*Jenny Wren is nesting by our window
Gathering morsels to make a home for her young
Moments spent quietly watching
Reminders that life just goes on*

Sylvie Silver



*It was frightening
The lightning struck violently
And lit up the sky,
I covered my eyes*

Tilly Salter

Hearts of Love

*Don't be sad, for what you had
The love you shared, can't be compared
Their memories live on, like a beautiful song
In our hearts they will stay, forever and a day*

Tracy Hankey on behalf of Ashview Care Home



*At times it's good to walk alone
And think of good or bad
But better to walk it hand in hand
And reflect on what we had*

Tracy Paine

*Left to my own devices, silence is not a state I readily embrace
Filling my time, instead with busyness and noise
However, this year has changed things, opening up
pockets of silence
And in these pockets I find myself open – open to
reflect – open to mourn*

Vic Rayner



*Daffodils bobbing in the breeze
Sun shining through the cloud
Through 365 days of restraint
Gratitude and hope prevail*

Victoria Tischler

*Cannot see any more smiles, as everyone is wearing a mask.
Missing a pint in my local and seeing family and friends.
Hoping for better times soon.
When covid is a thing of the past.*

Walter Ross



*When will this lockdown hell be finished
So I can go down to the pub for a Guinness.
Meet all my friends, family and more
It won't be long till they open that door.*

Wayne Roberts

Write your own poetry

If you have been inspired by these poems and would like to write your own, here are a few tips.

Tips for writing

- + Leap straight in – don't overthink it.
- + Keep it really simple – don't try to say too much.

Tools

- + Use rhyme to make your poem memorable and easy to read
- + Repeat key words to give your poem strength
- + Try making lists: they can be effective

Techniques

- + Focus on small everyday items or events – things that people recognise.
- + Appeal to the one or more of the senses – sound, smell, touch, taste, sight.
- + Be confident – your writing will be original and interesting to others.



Finishing your poem

- + Quatrains don't need a title but add one if you think it will help the reader understand or enjoy your poem.
- + Be sure to put your name and the date on it.

Writing prompts

Here are some ideas for your poems, try one of these, or one of your own:

A cup of tea	My mother's favourite song
At the seaside	When we first met
Flowers in a vase	What I miss most

Take care

Writing poetry and remembering those we love can be upsetting. If you need to talk to someone about any aspect of the process, you can contact the NAPA Helpline, we can provide a listening ear and signpost you to extra support and helpful resources.





*Prioritising
Wellbeing*

